

KEEPING YOU POSTED

Newsletter of the United Church of Christ

Property of
Graduate Theological Union

Vol. 23, No. 10, December 1988

ISSN 0361-8668

NOV 29 1988



Parish Clergywomen Increase

The number of UCC parish ministers is about the same as it was 10 years ago, but the proportion of women is up from 3% to 13%.

Those are among the facts yielded by a decade of annual salary studies released by Pension Boards executive vice-president John D. Ordway. The PB found 116 women among 3,951 full-time, active, parish minister members in its first survey in 1978. The 1988 study identified 157 women among a total of 3,962.

However, women's median salaries remain roughly one-fourth to one-third lower than men's. The median in 1988 was \$25,900 for men and \$20,250 for women, a gap of 27.9%. The gap was 27.3% in 1978; its widest point, 34.2%, came in 1981.

The survey defined salary as cash earnings plus parsonage allowance or value of parsonage if no allowance was provided.

Although the PB raw data do not include date of ordination, the gap may exist "partly because greater numbers of female ministers have received ordination only in recent decades," says Edmund G. Tortora, PB secretary for member relations. For example, the 49-and-under category includes about 83% of female ministers but only 52% of male ministers. Mr. Tortora says that while ongoing discrimination probably exists--meaning more favorable treatment for men than for women of equal skill and seniority--such discrimination cannot be determined from the survey.

As for pension funds, the 1978 survey showed that for 96% of all parish ministers, churches were making payments at General Synod's recommended rate of 11% of salary (98% contribute at least that much now). GS 13 in 1981 urged churches to make payments at 14% or more, and the 1988 survey shows that congregations now do so for 78% of all parish pastors. Among the 38 conferences surveyed this year (only Puerto Rico was not included), Florida had the highest average salary for parish ministers, \$31,099. Connecticut was second (\$29,252) and Southwest third (\$29,064).

Homeland Board Plans Homelessness Campaign

The Board for Homeland Ministries will mount a "national crusade" to fight homelessness.

The Homeland Board's board of directors took the action at its annual meeting in Cromwell, CT to address a problem described as an "attribution and national scandal." Staff were directed to have a plan of action ready by the directors' Dec. executive committee meeting. Executive vice president Charles Shelby took said UCBHM was prepared to take the initiative in mobilizing the entire religious community. He also mentioned organizing local churches to build shelters and low-income housing; assisting them in becoming advocates before local government; organizing business and industry support to build more housing; pushing for legislation at the Federal level to help the homeless, and increasing UCBHM budget and staff for the campaign.

Charging that neither major Presidential candidate had addressed the issue, Dr. Rooks said the church could lead the way to change U.S. attitudes toward the homeless.

Directors also endorsed the "Christian Faith and Economic Life" pronouncement that is to be submitted to General Synod, but dropped the provision to work for economic

justice through a Constitutional amendment.

In other business, directors called for ethical safeguards in genetic engineering; approved \$1,425,000 in grants and loans for local church building, and adopted a 1989 budget of \$13,576,000, up 5.5% over 1988.

Secretary for planning and management Robert P. Noble, Jr. was elected a general secretary, responsible for administration.



Fannie Luckenbaugh was on "Santa's List" last year for the UCC-related Homewood Retirement Centers, in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Area churches fill residents' gift requests, while "Santa and the elves" deliver them. Each resident got eight gifts.

Exec Council Alters Priorities Process

A new priorities process, a change in coordination of hunger activities, and permission to explore production of a new hymnal for the UCC were major agenda items for the Executive Council at its Oct. Yahara, WI meeting.

In the future, priorities will have a life span of six years, rather than four. A priority may only be renewed for an additional two years, which requires a two-thirds vote of General Synod. Synod will be able to vote for one priority in each of four major categories adopted by the Executive Council. These are "The Faith That Claims Us" (strengthening of faith and spiritual life), "Building Up the Body of Christ" (equipping the church for ministry and strengthening its covenant life), "Service to Persons in Need" (direct assistance) and "Witness and Advocacy in the World" (critical social concerns).

Also approved was a new definition of a priority as being "of high significance for the whole mission of the church, at home and overseas; which has been studied and is demonstrated to be biblically and theologically appropriate for the attention of the UCC; and which involves all parts of the Church in planning." GS 17 will be asked to amend standing rules so the new process begins in the 1989-1991 biennium.

The EC also voted to create a first-of-its-kind interagency program office to focus on hunger. Administrative funds will come from instrumentalities involved in hunger efforts and program money from the 60% national share of the Hunger Action Fund (starting in 1989, 20% each can be kept by churches and conferences). Decisions regarding office priorities and spending will be made by an interagency taskforce with representatives from all UCC national bodies providing funding.

UC Board for Homeland Ministries will convene the taskforce for overseeing hunger ministries. Hunger coordination currently is done by UC Board for World Ministries.

Congregations were urged by the EC to increase giving to the Hunger Action Fund.

Approval to look into production of a new hymnal was given to UCBHM, and a committee of 12 was authorized to conduct a churchwide survey by spring 1989 to determine whether there is a market for either a UCC or an ecumenical hymnal and to solicit ideas and concerns about content.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Student Ministers Change
With Seminarians, page 3

Racial Justice Commission
Helps Angolan Amputees,
Joins Fast, page 3

Preachers' Kids
Share Mixed
Memories, page 3

Help Stamp
Out Dupes,
page 4

God's Great Compassion

By William C. Green

In the UCC *Book of Worship*, a prayer for Christmastide speaks of God's "great compassion." Nothing better expresses the significance of Jesus' birth and the meaning of God's presence with us. Salvation and liberation, yes! The coming of justice and the establishment of righteousness, yes! But first, the incarnation: identification and compassion, God's ultimate love become intimate.

I sometimes wonder if we don't rush redemption, forgetting God's way of incarnation. We seem inclined to run from problems to solutions, moving very quickly from Jesus to justice, from his birth to our salvation. In so doing, we may overlook how thoroughly Jesus shares our predicament. We would sooner see him as God's answer, God's "fix" for society and ourselves, a way out of pain and perplexity rather than a way that embraces the trouble.

Our pragmatism makes us impatient with problems, leery of lingering too long without doing something. Compassion soon seems too passive, almost acquiescent—a good motivator but, in itself, not much of an accomplishment. Better to resolve the circumstances that arouse compassion than put up with sin or suffering a second longer!

We need to remember that "incarnation" is not only what makes "redemption" possible, but part of what makes it real. Jesus isn't much of an answer unless he is seen as part of our situation, one who shares the question. And so with the solutions and programs we pursue in his name. Unless these voice the hurts and hopes that pulse in our hearts too, our redemptive effort is at best paternalistic: It *may* liberate others, but what of us? How much "redemption" can finally be accomplished unless we ourselves know whereof we speak?

Incarnation is the condition of redemption, and its key. The iden-

tification and compassion of Immanuel, "God (is) with us," may leave unclear for a time the best form an answer should take. At times, we will confront problems that have no solution. But let us not neglect or underestimate the redemptive value of that identification that says *God really cares*, whoever and however and wherever you are.

This is expressed well in a little story told by William Muehl at the conclusion of his provocative book, *Why Preach? Why Listen?* (Fortress, 1986, p. 92):

"One December afternoon many years ago a group of parents stood in the lobby of a nursery school waiting to pick up their children after the last pre-Christmas session. As the youngsters ran from their lockers, each one carried in his or her hands the 'surprise,' the brightly wrapped package on which the class had been working for weeks.

"One small boy, trying to run, put on his coat, and wave to his parents all at the same time, slipped and fell. The 'surprise' flew from his grasp and landed on the tile floor with an obvious ceramic crash.

"The child's first reaction was one of stunned silence. But then he set up an inconsolable wail. His father, thinking to minimize the incident and comfort the boy, patted his head and murmured, 'Now that's all right. It really doesn't matter, son. It doesn't matter at all.'

"But the child's mother, somewhat wiser in such situations, dropped to her knees on the floor, swept the boy into her arms and said, 'Oh, but it does matter. It matters a great deal.' And she wept with her son."

God cares about, and *directly shares*, our predicament and uncertainty! This is the meaning of Christmas. God's compassionate identification with us is what the coming of Christ is all about. It's what brings healing and hope out of hurt and brokenness. It's what finally makes "all things new." It's the "good news of great joy, which shall be to all people."

William C. Green is associate conference minister with the Pennsylvania Northeast Conference and chair of the board of directors of the Office of Communication.

Priorities Report

Spiritual Renewal

A three-year spiritual enrichment emphasis began at WAYZATA (MN) UCC after members gave spirituality high marks in a needs survey. It has spawned a 6:30 A.M. weekday Bible study, an adult Christian education track on spiritual enrichment and a first-ever deacons' retreat that led to another one for all board and committee members. Also, "spirit" themes and symbols have been added to such existing programs as a spring mission festival and an autumn Rally Day.

The Homeless Poor

Christmas meals and gifts for 150 people are among the services ETHER UCC provides to the homeless and the poor of Montgomery County, NC. The state's Human Resources Department cited Ether in 1988 for its volunteer work.

Justice and Peace

Concerned about war toys, the FLORIDA CONFERENCE'S Just Peace Committee compiled a list of questions for adults to ask themselves before buying a toy. Among them: What will a child learn or imitate when using the toy? What attitude toward life does the toy promote? Would I feel comfortable using the toy in play with a child? Also, delegates to the conference's semiannual meeting in Sept. adopted a resolution urging members to write to manufacturers, TV producers and advertisers about how war toys, cartoons and ads affect children.

Youth/Young Adult Ministries



Audiences filled the fellowship hall at FIRST UCC, Quakertown, PA, twice last Feb. to see the 20-member cast of the church's Youth Music and Drama Group perform "Godspell." (Photo by Herman Ahrens)

OPPOSING VIEW

Two pastors had similar comments on their recommendation by the Craigville V Theological Colloquy that the UCC develop a rite of liturgical blessing for the stillborn (Oct. KYP).

ROBERT K. THOMPSON, pastor of St. John's UCC, Wheeling, WV, applauded the idea and suggested a similar ministry to parents experiencing miscarriages. "Yet," he writes, "I am struck by the irony of how we grieve over stillbirths and miscarriages, yet have no liturgical rite for the abortion of children whose stage of development may be no less than that of a miscarried or stillborn child."

ALBERT W. KOVACS, pastor of St. Peter's UCC, Frackville, PA, asserts that the Craigville witness "conflicts with General Synod's view that...life only begins at birth." He asks: "If stillborns never were human, never manifesting the image of God the Creator, isn't a liturgical blessing really pandering to a confused family? Can there be 'grieving parents' if there was no child?"

UPCOMING EVENTS

Two events celebrating Christian unity will be held in Jan. The worldwide observation of the WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY will occur Jan. 18-25. Theme, drawn from Romans 12, is "Building Community—One Body in Christ." Contact Week of Prayer Office, Graymoor Ecumenical Institute, Garrison, NY 10524, 914-424-3458. ECUMENICAL SUNDAY, set for Jan. 29, recognizes the organizations in which churches work in partnership. Contact National Council of Churches, Rm. 850, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115, 212-870-2227.

KEEPING YOU POSTED

P.O. Box 346
Kutztown, PA 19530

Published ten times per year (except July and August) at 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Second class postage paid at New York, NY 10001 and additional offices. Prepared by the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, editorial offices, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Postmaster: Send address changes to KYP at 105 Madison. ISSN 0361-8668

Student Ministers Change

A few years ago, most theology students were in their early 20's; now, the average age of seminarians is 30 to 35, say seminary officials nationwide. And as seminarians have grown older, churches have changed their expectations about those serving as student ministers. Coupled with being more mature, most theology students have worked prior to attending seminary. In fact, many seminarians enter the ministry as a second career, says Marilyn Wenger, associate professor for the practice of ministry at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. "Since they've worked professionally before, they frequently bring to their work with churches administrative and leadership skills which students attending seminary just after college often have not yet developed."

When "second career" seminarians are given their field work assignments, attention is paid to those skills which they lack, says Elizabeth Nordbeck, professor of church history at Lancaster Theological Seminary, PA. "If an older seminarian has never worked with youth, he will be asked to work with the youth group. On the other hand, if a student has not done much counseling, she will be given counseling assignments."

In the field, since they've had more experience as "heads of families and wage-earners," older seminarians are expected to be more competent than their younger counterparts, says Walter R. Dickhaut, dean of Bangor Theological Seminary, ME. "There's less tolerance when they make mistakes."

On the other side, pastors who work with older seminary students must be comfortable with competency, says Lynn Rhodes, assistant professor of ministry and field education at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA. "When supervising a student minister, a pastor is not only a mentor but a colleague and member of the same work team."

Charles Jenkins, pastor of The Community Church of Cedar Grove, NJ, says, for example, "I think of our student minister, John Mills, more as a colleague in my ministry than as someone who I teach about the ministry."

Mr. Mills, a 38-year-old software engineer, attends Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, WI. "We expect more of John than we would of a young person who has not worked before. He's served as a deacon of his church, so, unlike many young people, he knows how a church operates," says Mr. Jenkins. "John will work with the adults as well as the youth in our church. He will visit the homebound, make hospital calls and preach four times a semester."

Despite these changing views, the pastor still must supervise the student minister. Sometimes, in this process, difficult issues arise. Sharing supervisory responsibilities with a committee of lay people can help a pastor cope with conflicts that may occur, suggests Stephanie Weiner, pastor of Evangelical UCC, Webster Groves, MO.

PK's Remember 'Hideous Times,' 'Family's Love'

When New York City's Judson Memorial Church found 17 grownup "preachers' kids" among its 200 members, the "PK's" were asked to lead a Sunday worship service.

Three of them designed a questionnaire, 15 of them answered it and the responses helped form the July 10 service.

Survey responses that were read aloud during the service mentioned PK pro's and con's. One spoke of parents who taught tolerance so well "that some prejudices common to society never even occurred to me," and of "the absolute security I felt in my family's love." Another remembered "hideous times being a PK--the gossips; the demands on my parents' energies and health; not being able to be just a 'regular kid.'"

The group rewrote hymns to reflect growing up in the public eye due to their fathers' profession (only one mother was ordained and only after the child was grown). This revisionist music included "Faith Of Our Fathers," "This Is My Father's World" and a "PK Anthem" that began: "Are ye able," said the Master, "to be crucified with me?" "No!" the preachers' children answered. "Won't you ever let us be?"

But all the respondents said they are close to their parents now, and the "PK Anthem" ended: "Lord,...You will notice we're all here today. Because or in spite of Dad, we cannot stay away."

PERSONNEL CHANGE

CHRISTOPHER P. GOERING is the new stewardship Council's new associate for stewardship and mission communication. As such, he produces graphic and audiovisual resources and serves as an SC liaison to conferences. Previously, he was minister of congregational education since 1983 at Christ Church UCC, Bethlehem, PA.

SEND NEWS stories, PHOTOS and OPINION pieces of 100 words or less to the editor, Office of Communication, UCC, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Commission Aids Amputees, Calls Fast

Six recent victims of UNITA land mines in Angola are now in the U.S. receiving medical care as part of a Commission for Racial Justice humanitarian effort.

CRJ gained first-hand knowledge of Angola's amputee problem in Aug. when executive director Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. led 22 African-American church leaders on a tour of that war-torn country. Of the six amputees brought to the U.S., one is a woman and five are children also orphaned by attacks from the South Africa-backed UNITA forces. Angola has the world's highest rate of amputees.

Meanwhile, Dr. Chavis and CRJ staff will soon begin fasts in support of farmworkers

UC Scene

PAUL RITTER of ST. STEPHEN UCC, Perkasi, PA, is one three area pastors credited with helping settle a deadlocked teachers strike. Parents and community leaders asked the pastors for help when the strike entered its third week, tensions were high and no end was in sight. The pastors offered prayers, ran an ad in area newspapers calling for negotiations and spent hours on the telephone to get both sides to meet at a neutral location. Teachers finally ratified a four-year contract. "We simply called both sides together and said 'Won't you please negotiate?'," Mr. Ritter says.

UCC clergywoman DIANE COOKSEY KESSLER has been elected executive director of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. Previously, Ms. Kessler served 13 years as the Council's associate for strategy and action. A member of NEWTON HIGHLANDS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, she has been a member of the UCC Council for Ecumenism since 1984 and its chair since Jan. 1988. She is the author of *Parents and the Experts* and *God's Simple Gift*.

Health & Human Service Council Explains Zoning

Conference endorsements of UCC-related health and human services facilities has some local churches perplexed at giving time.

For years, churches, following UCC guidelines, have supported institutions zoned to their conferences. More recently, however, conferences have begun to give standing to institutions in their borders, causing churches to wonder if they should keep supporting out-of-state facilities in their zone.

The answer is yes, says J. Robert Achtermann, UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries executive director. The two practices address different concerns, he says. Standing acknowledges institutions as part of a conference's ministry, while zoning guidelines facilitate fundraising and information-sharing. Facilities are assigned to zones composed of one or more conferences.

Direct questions to Mr. Achtermann at CHHSM, 543 College Ave., Lancaster, PA, 17603, 717-299-9945 or 800-822-4476 outside Pennsylvania.

protesting widespread use of carcinogenic pesticides in California grape fields. CRJ commissioners, meeting in North Carolina in Oct., also urged the UCC president and other church leaders to join one- to three-day fasts calling attention to the high incidence of cancer and birth defects among grape workers.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

SECRETARY FOR CHURCH DEVELOPMENT is sought by UC Board for Homeland Ministries to help start new churches in consultation with conferences. Apply before Feb. 15 to Robert L. Burt, UCBHM, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001, 212-239-8700.

NEWS BRIEFS

World Council of Churches Announces Special Grants to Combat Racism

The Special Fund to Combat Racism of the World Council of Churches has given \$635,000 in 1988 grants to 59 groups working against racism. Half of the funds (\$320,000) went for humanitarian programs of four groups opposing apartheid in southern Africa: the South West Africa People's Organization (\$150,000), African National Congress (\$105,000), Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (\$45,000) and South African Congress of Trade Unions (\$20,000).

Grants also were made to two U.S. groups, the Association of Haitian Workers (\$7,500) and the Legal Assistance Project for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes (\$5,000). \$15,000 was contributed to this year's fund from the UCC Just Peace Offering.

German Partner Church Leaders Meet With UCC Members

Five leaders of the Evangelical Church of the Union--the UCC partner church in East and West Germany--met with 239 clergy and lay UCC members in seven consultations held across the U.S. in Oct. At the meetings, members of the partner churches discussed social and economic justice issues ranging from toxic waste to the rural crisis to unemployment.

Attending were 61 people in St. Louis, MO; 45 in Durham, NC; 34 each in Dayton, OH and Pottstown, PA; 31 in Colorado Springs, and 17 each in Sudbury, MA and Paynesville, MN.

A consultation was held in West Germany in Jan. 1988, and plans call for a consultation to take place in East Germany in 1989. The ECU and the UCC have had a special ecumenical relationship since 1981, following a vote by General Synod 13.

UCC Network Seeks Help From Churches in Anti-Pollution Campaign

The UCC Network for Environmental and Economic Responsibility, meeting in Oct. in Washington, DC, urged churches to get involved in composting and to set up nonprofit recycling centers. The group also called upon UCC churches and conferences, as well as all fast food chains, to begin using paper rather than plastic or styrofoam products.

NEAR asked UCC national agencies for assistance in carrying out these actions, taken in response to a consultation on "Economics and the Environment" held in Oct. in Germantown, MD and sponsored by NEAR and the UCC Office for Church in Society.

Oldest 'UCC' Church Celebrates Centennial

The oldest "United Church of Christ" church celebrated its 100th anniversary Nov. 13 with UCC president Avery D. Post preaching. First Congregational Church, St. Petersburg, FL, was named the "United Church of Christ" in 1888 when it was founded by the Home Missions Society of the Congregational Church. After a change in 1903 to United Church of Christ (Congregational), it assumed its current name in 1923.

National Geographic Society Adopts New World Map

In an effort to correct distortions found in most world maps, the National Geographic Society is adopting a new map, the Robinson Projection. Traditional maps have inaccurately represented continents of the Northern Hemisphere, where most of the industrialized nations are located, as being larger than those in the Southern Hemisphere, where most Third World Nations are found, according to the National Council of Churches, which has been active around the issue. Friendship Press, its publishing arm, began distribution in 1983 of an alternative map, the Peters Projection, with support from the United Nations Development Programme.



Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed of a day when all children could live in dignity and peace. The Just Peace Special Appeal supports local, conference and national UCC efforts to make this dream a reality. Suggested date is Jan. 15, Dr. King's birthday. (Artwork by Sue Garmon)

Seeing Double?

Some readers have reported receiving duplicate copies each month of *Keeping You Posted* and *United Church News*.

Churches are sent multiple copies to cover each member of the professional pastoral staff. These are addressed by title--Pastor I, etc.--and the Office of Communication looks to the church to distribute them.

Pastors should *not*, however, be getting one copy at the church or office by title and one by name, or one at work and one at home or any duplicates of either publication.

If you are receiving multiple copies, please help save money by sending *all* your labels to *KYP-UC News* Mailing List, OC, UCC, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Call 212-683-5656 with questions.

RECOMMENDED

Inspired is a bimonthly publication for and by those involved in the preservation of historic religious buildings. Subscription is \$20/year from *Inspired*, Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corp., 1 E. Penn Square, 22nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107, 215-568-42100.

Desktop Publishing for Congregations, A Guide to Getting Started, by Charles Austin, is a simple introduction on how to use computers to compose newsletters, flyers and other publications. Also covers why churches need the new technology, its basic hardware and software, and how to get help. \$4.95. Augsburg Publishing House, 426 S. 5 St., Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440, 612-330-3300.

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM NELSON, 82, former UC Board for Homeland Ministries officer, died on Oct. 10 in Millville, NJ. He was UCBHM assistant treasurer and, later, secretary for administration until retiring in 1973 after 40 years of church service.

AUGUST G. BURCHARDT, 81, UCBHM church building secretary from the formation of the UCC in 1957 until retiring in 1972, died in his Webster Groves, MO home on Sept. 25. Mr. Burchardt also served as interim conference minister in Florida and Illinois.

KEEPING YOU POSTED

P.O. Box 346
Kutztown, PA 19530

Second Class Postage
paid at New York, NY
and additional mailing
offices.

GRADUATE THEOL UNION AU 111
LIBRARY
2400 RIDGE ROAD
BERKELEY CA 94709

